



March 22, 2012

Testimony for pending substitute for HB 4718

Good Morning Members of the House Health Policy Committee, and Chair Haines.

My name is Melanie D. Colbert, RDH PA 161 and I am the President Elect of MDHA. I am also known as The Traveling Tooth Station and I support the pending substitute for HB 4718 for a second pair of hands for the RDH.

This bill authorizes the registered dental hygienist the ability to utilize a "second pair of hands" if assigned by the supervising dentist. It would be a tremendous help during treatment to have a "second pair of hands". There are times during procedures that I am certain my patients would feel more comfortable if they were not required to participate in the treatment process. For example, I sometime have patients hold the saliva ejector, because it gets in the way of treatment. Patients cannot provide this much needed assistance with cheek retraction or with radiographs like a "second pair of hands". Disinfecting the work area would be facilitated and would decrease the amount of time lost between patient treatments. Patient OHI would be improved and customized as services could be delivered efficiently at chair side with little or no time constraints to consider.

To encourage patients to seek follow up care a professional presentation is critically important. PA161s have to establish their credibility based on the initial and only appointment they have with their patients. We don't get a second chance to make a good first impression consequently having a "second pair of hands" would instill confidence and credibility from the start of treatment. Having assistance greatly impacts our professional image and further enhances the dental services we provide. There would be a greater capacity to improve the oral health of the patient and to increase the number of patients that receive treatment in a safe and professional manner.

This is a bill that helps the RDH in private practice as well as collaborative PA161 programs, the patients we treat and the supervising dentist. Please vote yes on the substitute for HB4718 and send it to the full house for a vote.

Thank You,

Melanie D. Colbert, RDH PA161

President-Elect MDHA

The Traveling Tooth Station